CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method for obtaining a service, comprising:

5   identifying a service needed to perform a processing function in a
processor based system coupled to a network; and

           searching at least one remote device on the network for the service to
perform the processing function.

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2.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

       determining a local availability of the service; and

       wherein the step of searching the at least one remote device on the
network for the service to perform the processing function is performed when the
15   service is not locally available.

3.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

       finding a first revision of the service that is locally available; and

20   wherein the step of searching at least one remote device on the
network for the service to perform the processing function further comprises
searching the at least one remote device for a second revision of the service that is
later than the first revision.

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4.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

       automatically downloading the service from the at least one remote
device when the service is found thereon;

       automatically installing the service in the processor based system;
30   and

       performing the processing function.

5.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

requesting a performance of the processing function on the at least one remote device when the service is found thereon; and

storing a data result in the processor based system, the data result having been generated by the at least one remote device and received therefrom by the processor based system.

6.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of searching the at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function further comprises consulting a directory that associates the service with the at least one remote device.

7.   The method of claim 2, wherein the step of identifying the service needed to perform the processing function in the processor based system coupled to the network further comprises examining a digital document to determine a font included therein, wherein the service is a font and the processing function entails rendering the digital document.

8.   The method of claim 7, wherein the step of searching the at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function when the service is not locally available further comprises:

determining whether the font is stored in a font directory in the processor based system;

searching the at least one remote device on the network for the font when the font is not stored in the font directory;

automatically downloading the font from the at least one remote device when the font is found thereon; and

automatically installing the font in the processor based system.

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9.   A program stored on a computer readable medium for obtaining a service, comprising:

code that identifies a service needed to perform a processing function in a processor based system coupled to a network; and

5   code that searches at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function.

10.   The program stored on the computer readable medium of claim 9,

10   further comprising:

code that determines a local availability of the service; and

wherein the code that searches the at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function executes when the service is not locally available.

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11.   The program stored on the computer readable medium of claim 9, further comprising:

code that finds a first revision of the service that is locally available;

20   and

wherein the code that searches the at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function further comprises code that searches the at least one remote device for a second revision of the service that is later than the first revision.

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12.   The program stored on the computer readable medium of claim 9, further comprising:

code that automatically downloads the service from the at least one

30   remote device when the service is found thereon; and

code that automatically installs the service in the processor based system.

16

13.   The program stored on the computer readable medium of claim 9, further comprising:

code that requests a performance of the processing function on the at least one remote device when the service is found thereon; and

code that stores a data result in the processor based system, the data result having been generated by the at least one remote device and received therefrom by the processor based system.

14.   The program stored on the computer readable medium of claim 9, wherein the code that searches the at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function further comprises code that consults a directory that associates the service with the at least one remote device.

15.   The program stored on the computer readable medium of claim 10, wherein the code that identifies the service needed to perform the processing function in the processor based system coupled to the network further comprises code that examines a digital document to determine a font included therein, wherein the service is a font and the processing function entails rendering the digital document.

16.   A system for obtaining a service, comprising:

means for identifying a service needed to perform a processing function in a processor based system coupled to a network; and

means for searching at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function.

17. The system of claim 16, further comprising:

   means for determining a local availability of the service; and

   wherein the means for searching the at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function is implemented when the service is not locally available.

18. The system of claim 16, further comprising:

   means for finding a first revision of the service that is locally available; and

   wherein the means for searching the at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function further comprises means for searching the at least one remote device for a second revision of the service that is later than the first revision.

19. The system of claim 16, further comprising:

   means for automatically downloading the service from the at least one remote device when the service is found thereon; and

   means for automatically installing the service in the processor based system.

20. The system of claim 16, further comprising:

   means for requesting a performance of the processing function on the at least one remote device when the service is found thereon; and

   means for storing a data result in the processor based system, the data result having been generated by the at least one remote device and received therefrom by the processor based system.

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21.   The system of claim 16, wherein the means for searching the at least one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function further comprises means for consulting a directory that associates the service with the at least one remote device.

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22.   The system of claim 17, wherein the means for identifying the service needed to perform the processing function in the processor based system coupled to the network further comprises means for examining a digital document to

10   determine a font included therein, wherein the service is a font and the processing function entails rendering the digital document.

23.   The system of claim 22, wherein the means for searching the at least

15   one remote device on the network for the service to perform the processing function when the service is not locally available further comprises:

        means for determining whether the font is stored in a font directory in the processor based system;

        means for searching the at least one remote device on the network for

20   the font when the font is not stored in the font directory;

        means for automatically downloading the font from the at least one remote device when the font is found thereon; and

        means for automatically installing the font in the processor based system.

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HP Case No: 10007341-1

24. A method for obtaining a service, comprising:

identifying whether a font is stored in a font directory accessible by a
processor based system, the font being included in a document to be rendered by
the processor based system, the processor based system being coupled to a

5   network;

consulting a directory that associates the font with at least one remote
device coupled to a network to be searched for the font when the font is not stored
in the font directory;

searching the at least one remote device on the network for the font to

10   render the document when the font is not stored in the font directory;

automatically downloading the font from the at least one remote
device if the font is found thereon;

automatically installing the font in the processor based system; and

performing the rendering operation using the font.

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HP Case No: 10007341-1